

Emergency Managers Mutual Aid Plan

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Emergency Managers Mutual Aid Plan

Introduction

Purpose The purpose of Emergency Managers Mutual Aid (EMMA) is to support disaster operations in affected jurisdictions by providing professional emergency management personnel.

Objectives The objectives of the EMMA Plan include:

1. Providing emergency management personnel from unaffected areas to support local jurisdictions, Operational Areas, and regional emergency operations during proclaimed emergencies.
2. Providing a system, including an organization, information, and forms necessary to coordinate the formal request, reception, assignment, and training of assigned personnel.
3. Establishing a structure to maintain this document (the Emergency Managers Mutual Aid Plan) and its procedures.
4. Providing for the coordination of training for emergency managers, including Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) training, emergency management course work, exercises, and disaster response procedures.
5. Promoting professionalism in emergency management.

Background

In accordance with the Master Mutual Aid Agreement, local and state emergency managers have responded in support of each other under a variety of plans and procedures. Immediately following the 1994 Northridge earthquake, city and county emergency managers in the Office of Emergency Services (OES) Coastal, Southern, and Inland Regions developed a coordinated emergency management concept called the Emergency Managers Mutual Aid (EMMA) system. EMMA provided a valuable service in the emergency response and recovery efforts at the Southern Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC), local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), the Disaster Field Office (DFO), and community service centers.

Authorities

- Master Mutual Aid Agreement
- Sections 2400-2450 of Title 19, Division 2 of the California Code of Regulations (Standardized Emergency Management System - SEMS)
- California Emergency Services Act (Gov. Code Section 8550 et seq.)
- California Labor Code, Section 3211.92 (Disaster Services Workers)

Assumptions

The Emergency Managers Mutual Aid Plan is based on the following assumptions:

1. The main tenet of mutual aid operations is that there is full commitment of resources by the requesting jurisdiction prior to the initiation of a mutual aid request. This does not require actual exhaustion of all resources, but it does anticipate full mobilization and commitment to the emergency.
2. When needed, the OES Regional Administrator, or designee, will designate an EMMA Coordinator at the regional level. The EMMA Coordinator at each SEMS level will facilitate the assignment of EMMA resources.
3. Requests for mutual aid will follow normal mutual aid channels, consistent with the Master Mutual Aid Agreement and SEMS.
4. Local government must use SEMS in order to be eligible for possible state funding of response-related personnel costs pursuant to activities identified in the California Code of Regulations.

Organization

The EMMA system is composed of emergency management personnel from local and state government. The process for the allocation of resources is as follows:

- The county, cities, and special districts will forward their requests for mutual aid through the Operational Area.

- The Operational Area will act as the coordination point between the county, cities, and special districts and the OES region.
- The OES regional offices (or REOCs) will act as the coordination point and facilitate mutual aid among Operational Areas.
- The State Office of Emergency Services headquarters (or the SOC) will facilitate the provision of mutual aid among OES regions.

Policies and Procedures

General

The general policies and procedures guiding EMMA include the following:

1. Mutual aid is requested and provided because it is needed to respond to an emergency, not because it is anticipated that local government will be reimbursed by state or federal disaster funds.
2. State OES will train its regional personnel on the procedures and information contained in this plan. At the time of an event, OES may request a knowledgeable local emergency management official to assist with EMMA requests as part of the Logistics Section during REOC and State Operations Center activation.
3. The State Office of Emergency Services coordinates mutual aid (from requester to responder jurisdiction), primarily drawing from local government sources. As necessary, OES may provide state agency employees in response to mutual aid requests.
4. Assignments of EMMA personnel will normally be to local government and Operational Area Emergency Operations Centers, Regional Emergency Operations Centers, and community service centers staffed by federal, state, and local officials.
5. Response Information Management System (RIMS) forms will be utilized to the fullest extent possible.
6. Under certain circumstances, mutual aid costs may be reimbursable. Individuals providing mutual aid will be responsible for maintaining their own logs, time sheets, travel claims, and other documentation necessary for reimbursement. This documentation will be submitted to their agency. Associated costs incurred by the jurisdictions providing assistance may be eligible for reimbursement under the Natural Disaster Assistance Act (NDAA), when a state of emergency has been proclaimed; and by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288 as amended, when there is a Presidential Declaration.

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7. Mutual aid between local jurisdictions will be for a specific, agreed upon period of time for each local emergency response. Normally, 7 days (minimum) to 14 days (maximum) will be the standard commitment period.
8. During the first three years of implementing the EMMA Plan, in an effort to assist with its maintenance and improvement, exit survey and evaluation forms will be completed by EMMA participants. These forms will be forwarded to the Regional Administrator of the affected jurisdictions. Upon review by the Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committee (MARAC), recommendations for any changes will be forwarded to State OES Planning Section.

Personnel

The following principles guide the selection and use of EMMA personnel:

1. The primary source of volunteers for EMMA positions will be from emergency management personnel, defined as: “A state or local government employee responsible for managing, planning, operating, or providing logistical or finance/administrative support to emergency activities or programs.”
2. Emergency personnel will have, at a minimum, completed the “Introduction to SEMS” and “Emergency Operations Center” courses or equivalent training. Typical assignment positions are: EOC management staff (PIO and Safety Officer), Administrative Support, Section Chiefs, Branch Coordinators, and Technical Specialists.
3. The requesting jurisdiction is to make special arrangements with the responding jurisdiction, in coordination with the REOC, to continue the duty assignments of an EMMA mutual aid person for more than 14 calendar days.
4. All emergency management personnel will receive a general information sheet prior to being dispatched to an assignment.
5. The requesting jurisdiction will brief assigned personnel and provide a procedure manual, all paperwork, tools, and equipment necessary to perform EMMA assignments.
6. The requesting jurisdiction may provide identification badges, if needed locally, to EMMA personnel upon their arrival. There is no requirement for special identification.
7. The position of EMMA Coordinator will be part of the Logistics Section (Personnel Branch).
8. In order to increase the number of experienced emergency management personnel available for mutual aid service, a “trainee”

position to assist the requesting jurisdiction during the emergency may be established with the consent of all parties.

- a) The definition for a trainee is a person with limited actual disaster response experience who accompanies and works under the general direction of an experienced EMMA Mutual Aid responder on a given assignment.
 - b) The conditions of the trainees' assignment will include a statement of the general duties to be performed and the length of assignment.
9. The requesting local jurisdictions will forward release notification upon completion of the assignment to the receiving Operational Areas (OAs). The OAs will forward the release notifications to the Region. The Region will forward notification to the responding OAs, who will forward the same to the appropriate responding local government. The SOC will be kept informed via RIMS for tracking purposes.

Liability

Emergency management personnel provided under the EMMA plan are public employees who, during disaster situations, are considered Disaster Service Workers. Work-related injuries to EMMA personnel will be handled by the responding jurisdiction under Workers Compensation.

EMMA personnel act as Disaster Service Workers of the providing jurisdiction, and as such are provided the immunities, protections, and benefits of Disaster Service Workers, as provided in the California Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid Agreement. As between the jurisdictions receiving and providing assistance, the liability for the acts or omissions of EMMA personnel, if any, shall be determined by the particular nature of those acts or omissions accomplished while providing or receiving mutual aid.

The cost to repair extraordinary damage to a personal or local jurisdiction's vehicle, when the vehicle is being used in the performance of a specific assignment, will be provided by the requesting jurisdiction. Normal wear and tear is excluded.

Training

Upon adoption of the EMMA plan by the California Emergency Council, the State OES will assemble a group to assess training needs, select and recommend course materials, and include training on the EMMA Plan and related procedures in emergency response and REOC training.

Responsibilities

Local Government & Operational Areas

Local government and Operational Areas are responsible for:

1. Reviewing and understanding the policies and procedures of the EMMA Plan.
2. Identifying staff and procedures to integrate the position of EMMA Coordinator into their emergency organization.
3. Participating in exercises of the system.
4. Coordinating information between local government and the Operational Area, and between Operational Areas and OES Regions, as provided in SEMS to ensure timely resource information.

State Office of Emergency Services

The State Office of Emergency Services, through the Administrative Regions, is responsible for:

1. Training state and regional Emergency Operations Center personnel on use of the EMMA system and the functions of an EMMA Coordinator.
2. Facilitating mutual aid among the regions and Operational Areas.
3. Appointing an EMMA Coordinator to the REOC/SOC Logistics Section, when needed, for the purpose of coordinating mutual aid requests.
4. Providing a system to coordinate information between Operational Areas and the OES Regions; and to coordinate and process information from the OES Regions to the State Operations Center.

Concept of Operations

Activation

Activation involves the following:

1. The system can be activated for small, single-jurisdictional emergencies or for large-scale disasters involving multiple jurisdictions.
2. Local government requests for mutual aid are made to the Operational Area. The Operational Area is responsible for coordinating mutual aid within its area.
3. Mutual aid requests that an Operational Area is unable to fill are forwarded to the OES Region.

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4. When mutual aid is needed from another region, the request is made by the affected OES Region, through the SOC, to another OES Region.
5. During a multi-regional incident, requests for mutual aid are coordinated with the SOC by the OES Regions.
6. During all levels of activation, local jurisdictions coordinate information on resource utilization through their respective Operational Areas.

Deactivation

Deactivation involves the following:

1. Each person assigned to provide mutual aid assistance will submit all reimbursement documentation to their agency's finance manager.
2. The EMMA Coordinator or the personnel branch coordinator at each affected SEMS level will submit copies of an EMMA exit survey (completed by EMMA response personnel) and an EMMA evaluation (completed by the receiving jurisdiction) to the Emergency Operations Center manager, with recommendations for improvements.
3. Prior to deactivation, each individual providing mutual aid will complete the requesting agency's deactivation paper work and submit it to the requesting jurisdiction.
4. The Operational Area Logistics Section Chief will provide the OES Regional Administrator with an evaluation for EMMA response personnel.
5. The OES Regional Administrator will forward copies of the forms to the State OES Planning Section.

Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)

The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) incorporates the five functions - management, planning/intelligence, operations, logistics, and finance/administration - consistently, from the field level to the state level. All phases of the EMMA system are to operate consistent with SEMS regulations.

References

- Master Mutual Aid Agreement
- Sections 2400 - 2450 of Title 19, Division 2 of the California Code of Regulations (Standardized Emergency Management Systems - SEMS)
- California Labor Code, Section 3211.92 (Disaster Service Worker)
- Natural Disaster Assistance Act, Chapter 7.5 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code
- Section 8655 and 8656 of the California Emergency Services Act, Article 17, Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code